The Southern PATRIOT

Volume 8 | New Orleans, Louisiana, September, 1950 | No. 7

College Doors Opening While Officials Use Delaying Tactics

In the wake of U. S. Supreme Court decisions in the Sweatt and McLaurin cases efforts to wipe out remaining segregation barriers in Southern schools have been greatly stepped up.

Delaware's Court of Chancery declared, upon a petition by the NAACP, that Negroes should be admitted as undergraduates to the University of Delaware. This is the first court action involving undergraduates.

The suit of Gregory H. Swanson against the University of Virginia, seeks not only his admission to the graduate law school but also an injunction that would admit all other qualified Negro applicants, graduate and undergraduate, to any division of the university. After a 30 minute hearing on Sept. 5, a 3-judge Federal court ordered the University to admit Swanson, and all others "similarly situated."

In North Carolina two students of the state's Jim Crow law school, Harold Epps and Robert Glass, have instituted court action to gain admission to the Chapel Hill "white" law school with the aim of gaining a ruling outlawing segregation *per se*.

Twelve Negro applicants rejected by the Louisiana State University board of supervisors planned to file suits early in September.

The Florida supreme court opened the University of Florida to Negroes—but only until such courses presently not offered are made available in Jim Crow institutions.

These developments fairly well indicate the pattern events will take for some time in the future.

State and college officials in many instances have chosen, through timidity or design, to interpret the recent Supreme Court rulings in the narrowest sense and are willing to force, without especial hope of victory, court tests in any threat to segregation that confronts them.

In most instances it seems to be a shirking of responsibility. Men who see the justice of the situation but fear social censure want the "out" of being able to say that they were forced into giving the Negro an even break.

Some, however, are more belligerent in their resistance. At the Georgia Democratic convention, for example, it was shouted, "We will go to jail before we will let whites and Negroes go to school together."

Dr. William Boyd of Atlanta University, president of the state's chapter of NAACP, promised to give any of the delegates that so desired that chance.

In the long run, though, one can hope with some confidence for the same relatively unquestioned acceptance of the Negro student as there is for the Negro voter.

BEACHHEAD I

Heavy American artillery guns went into action, the semi-silent 'whoosh' of mortar shells began to zoom overhead and with that intensive barrage pouring into North Korean forces, two infantry companies of the famous Twenty-fourth Regiment swept into vital Yechan.

Brown-skinned doughboys became spattered with blood. Some of it was their own. But most of it was that of slant-eyed North Korean Reds who found themselves in hand-to-hand combat facing America's oldest and most battle-tested and proved Negro infantry outfit.

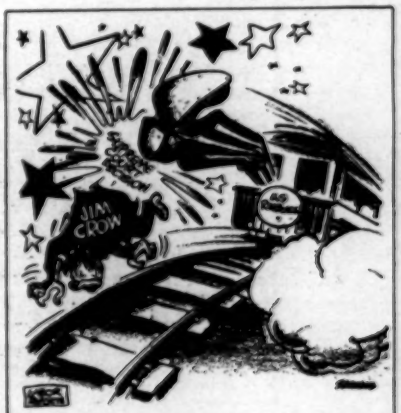
(Pittsburgh COURIER, 7-29-50)

BEACHHEAD II

Near riots marred the quiet of historic Colonial Beach, Va., when Negro swimmers made a test case of the segregation laws of that little Southern town by actually swimming at the beach. Trouble erupted and a fracas ensued afterwards. Negro leaders, headed by Atty. Martin A. Martin of Richmond, Va., are continuing to press their fight to open the use of the beach facilities to all swimmers regardless of race. They have a suit already filed in Federal Court and new 'test-swimming parties' were scheduled to go into operation until Jim Crow feels the death blow.

(Pittsburgh COURIER, 8-19-50)

But JC Is Riding Again



"GETTING OFF!"

Southern Railway Drops 'Silken Curtains' But Keeps Separate Tables

The Southern Railway has given its defiant answer to the Supreme Court ruling in the Henderson case. It will abolish the "silken curtain" but will keep segregation.

On June 5 the United States Supreme Court ruled, in the *Henderson case*, that the curtained-off tables, "reserved" for Negroes, in dining cars of the Southern Railway, were a violation of the Interstate Commerce Act which forbids a railway in interstate commerce "to

(Continued on page 2)

Southern Railway

(Continued from page 1)

subject any particular person to any undue or unreasonable prejudice".

In an order signed by R. K. McLain, assistant vice-president, effective July 1st, dining car stewards are instructed to seat white and Negro patrons at opposite ends of the car.

"Stewards will bear in mind", said the directive, "(occupied space permitting), white passengers should be seated from the buffet or kitchen end of the dining car and colored persons from the opposite end." (From the ends toward the middle). This of course follows the familiar device of street cars and buses in Southern cities.

"No passenger seeking dining car service during the meal hour shall be refused such service when there is a vacant seat in the diner."

When is a Man not a Man?

"When entering singly," the directive stated, "women will be seated with women, men with men, young people with young people, elderly persons with elderly persons, white persons with white persons, and colored with colored."

Men will be seated with men, it is noted, but evidently a Negro man is not considered a man in the Southern Railway book. Just what is he?

The question naturally arises, what will the steward do if a white and colored man, travelling together, enter the dining car? According to his orders, he will be compelled to separate them according to race, but this clearly is a violation of the Interstate Commerce Act under the ruling in the Henderson case.

It Happened In Mississippi

Because we believe that the South is more than its Rankins and Talmadges and Wrights, we have emphasized in this publication the positive, progressive events that are taking place in this region.

Recently, however, a spectacle was performed so terrifying in its implications that to ignore or slight it would be harmfully unrealistic. We refer to the incidents attending the stay of execution granted Willie McGee, a Negro convicted of rape in Laurel, Miss. Therefore we print below excerpts from the press concerning this event.

"W. S. Honnell, who identified himself as a former business manager of the State mental institution at Whitfield, said he 'cuffed one of them' (a member of the Civil Rights Congress delegation) 'around in the lobby' of their hotel . . . Honnell said he 'just wanted to get it out of my system.' "—(New Orleans TIMES-PICAYUNE, 7-26-50)

"Grossman" (Atty. Aubrey Grossman of the CRC) said . . . " 'Into my room' (in the Heidelberg Hotel, Jackson) 'about 9 a. m. came . . . the Governor, chief of police, chief of detectives, the state police head and the manager of the hotel . . . They wanted me to get out of town. He said he refused to leave until McGee won a reprieve or was executed.' "—(Jackson NEWS, 7-28-50)

" 'About 5 last night', Grossman said, 'I was alone in my hotel room in Jackson when someone knocked on the door and said, this is Western Union. When I opened the door, eight men rushed in and immediately started attacking me. All but the well-dressed leader were swinging blackjacks, police blackjacks.' " (ibid.)

The Governor Speaks

"I" (Gov. Wright) "went down to the hotel personally and knocked on Grossman's door . . . I told Grossman that there was no danger of mob violence, and I personally offered to escort him to the state line."

"The Governor also said that he told Grossman that 'the Communists in Korea are shooting Americans, and that it is time for us to start shooting them here in Jackson.

"He said he also told Grossman: 'I don't care what happens to you.' . . . At the conclusion of his talk, Wright . . . was given an ovation . . ." (Wright was speaking at a luncheon of the Cleveland, Miss. Exchange Club, held at the American Legion Hut.)—(Jackson DAILY NEWS, 7-28-50)

"Police Chief Holden said he had reports that Steve Fischer, a reporter for the N. Y. DAILY COMPASS, was knocked down at the railroad station . . . and that Sidney Ordower, a Chicago radio commentator and member of the delegation, was slapped twice at the airport about midnight. In New Orleans Fischer said he 'got slugged pretty hard' by about 20 men and fell down a couple of times. In Chicago Ordower said he was set on by about 15 men and that he received lacerations and bruises."—(Jackson CLARION-LEDGER, 7-27-50)

"Washington—ANP—In the private chambers of Supreme Court Justice Harold Burton, last Wednesday, John R. Poole, a white practicing attorney of Jackson, Miss., related the story on Tuesday night when he was leaving for Washington to appeal for a stay of execution for his client Willie McGee . . .

"According to Poole, the group attacked and beat Ordower as soon as he had gotten out of the car at the airport. Then one said, 'Here's the lawyer, let's get him.' The gang then knocked him down and began beating him. Fortunately he escaped with only bruises on the back and knots on the head."—(Oklahoma City BLACK DISPATCH, 8-5-50)

"They Deserved It and More.

"The people of Mississippi have no regrets to express over the physical beatings administered to Aubrey Grossman . . . Sidney Ordower . . . and Steve Fischer. The only regret to be expressed is that they were not more roughly handled . . . these men invited trouble, and it is just too damned bad that they didn't get larger doses of what they asked for."—(Editorial, Jackson DAILY NEWS, 7-28-50)

"If eight men took part (in the beating of Grossman) they pulled a mighty poor job." Frederick Sullens, editor of the DAILY NEWS, quoted these words by Police Chief Holden, and commented, 'Them's our sentiments. There's one guy for whom a funeral is very much overdue."—(DAILY NEWS, 7-30-50)

"Laurel, Miss. July 26. News that McGee had again been granted a stay by the U. S. Supreme Court reached here at 11.32 Wednesday morning and was soon circulated through the city. Tension was high as the hours wore on and the crowds began to mill around the county jail shortly after the noon hour.

"Five minutes before McGee was removed deputy Royals, the County Jailer, walked from across the street into the courthouse lawn and went into his home in the jail building.

"Most of the crowd moved to that area . . . Within five minutes someone whistled from the area fronting the courthouse and the crowd moved in that direction.

"If they meant mob violence they were too late. McGee and the deputy sheriff were already in the state automobile and were moving away before the greater numbers realized what had happened.

"As the deputy and the convicted Negro stepped onto a sidewalk fronting the courthouse, an unidentified man took a swing at McGee. Another nearby swung at the officer but before others could reach them Royals and the Negro were safely in the waiting car which sped away." (ibid.)

TRENDS

Twelve members of the board of directors of the Miami, Fla., Red Cross chapter have resigned in a dispute resulting from that city's losing the 1950 national convention because of a minority's insistance that delegates must be segregated.

Those quitting were members who were willing to waive Jim Crow for the occasion and protested the national body's refusal to override the minority's objections.

* * *

A Pennsylvania physician, Dr. Leonard Z. Johnson of Harrisburg, has entered into a controversy with the state health department over the filling out of the "Race" blank on birth certificates.

Dr. Johnson, a graduate of Howard University, has been writing "Human" in the space, contending that any other designation serves no useful purpose.

The courts may have to decide the issue.

* * *

The Rev. S. P. Holland, pastor of a Tulsa Methodist church, received an invitation to serve as chaplain in the Oklahoma National Guard, but was rejected when it was discovered he was a Negro.

Rev. Holland was a chaplain with the rank of captain in World War II . . . but, of course, with a Jim Crow unit.

* * *

Urban League statistics in Little Rock reveal that at least 85 per cent of the Negro boys there, good and bad, have been arrested at least once. "It is no wonder the good ones leave," the statistician laments.

* * *

Report has come of a Columbia University study of a housing development in which resided 400 white families and as many Negro families.

The city in which this project is located is only called "Steel City"—and is presumably Pittsburgh.

The people had been living there 10 years. Inquiry discovered only 10 per cent of both races expected to enjoy friendly relations upon moving in. 20 per cent of the Negroes and 50 per cent of the whites felt sure there was bound to be trouble.

But there had been no race riots. In fact over 50 per cent of the whites and 45 per cent of the Negroes declared that such mixed residence is an improvement over their previous mode of existence. And in areas of the project where the two were most closely brought in contact, white opinion was the most liberal on the matter.

* * *

A new law enacted by the state of New York prohibits racial and religious discrimination or segregation in quasi-public housing erected in the future.

This measure extends an injunction already covering wholly public housing and limited dividend projects.

* * *

An outbreak of racial violence occurred at the Memphis International Harvester Company plant when several Negroes were attacked by white workers in protest over the upgrading of a 38-year-old Negro employee to a job as crane operator.

The company, despite the interruption in production, stood firm behind a statement that "International Harvester promotes employees on merit and seniority" and the promotion stuck and peace returned.

* * *

In Little Rock a non-discriminatory hiring program set up by Ottenheimer Brothers Garment Manufacturing Company has entered its seventh year with results the manufacturer terms "grand."

The company started the policy because of a war-time shortage of help, but now has made the program permanent, hiring approximately 145 Negroes in the past two-and-one-half years.

Negroes and whites work side by side, receiving the same pay and benefits.

* * *

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—the quadruplet boys born to Mr. and Mrs. Sancil Martin of Pass Christian, Miss.—were considered so newsworthy an event that the Dixiecrat Times Picayune of New Orleans relaxed its ban against Negro photos to run pictures of them. That is, the pictures were run in three early editions then left out of the final, which has the largest circulation.

* * *

The construction of Elliston Heights subdivision in Memphis, Tenn., one of the first privately financed housing developments for Negroes, is scheduled to begin at an early date.

Another first is that the backers of the $1,200,000 project are two Negro-owned insurance companies, the Universal Life Insurance Company of Memphis and the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company of Durham.

* * *

Miss Althea Gibson, student at Florida A&M, became the first Negro tennis player allowed to compete upon the greens of aristocratic Forest Hills as her entry, heartily endorsed by such white stars as Mrs. Margaret DuPont and Alice Marble, was accepted for the National Women's Singles Championship tourney.

Miss Gibson was eliminated in her second round by the highly favored former National champion, Louise Brough, but not until Miss Gibson had come within one game of victory.

* * *

Mrs. Mollie Huston Lee, Librarian at the Richard B. Harrison Public Library, Raleigh, N. C. and Supervisor of N. C. Negro Public Libraries, has been elected to the American Library Assoc. Council for 1950-54.

* * *

We Recommend

Two new movies from the 20th Century-Fox Studios: 'Broken Arrow' a story of the fight for freedom and equality of the Apache Indians, one of the few Hollywood pictures to show the American Indian as a dignified, freedom-loving person; and "No Way Out", the fight of a young Negro interne, against race prejudice.

* * *

General Walter Leo Weible has reportedly issued an order restricting Negro occupation troops in Japan to one of the four available swimming pools in the Tokyo area.

The NAACP has filed a protest.

THAT BIRD CASTS A PRETTY BIG SHADOW

—Afro-American